



New Richland - Hartland - Ellendale - Geneva Public Schools

2020-2021 School Year Learning Plan

School Board Approved August 17, 2020

Revised December 7, 2020

Dear Families:

This document reflects a great deal of time, reflection, thought, input, and careful planning in developing a framework for providing students with meaningful, relevant, rigorous and enjoyable learning experiences given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you to the 2020-2021 School Year Planning Committee and a number of other staff members for contributing to the development of this plan. Thank you to staff and families for your input as it has been essential to the planning in order to identify the areas needing attention and improvement along with options to consider in the development of the three learning plans (In-person for All, Hybrid, Distance Learning).

1. **In-person Learning for All Students.** In this planning scenario, schools create as much space between students and teachers as is feasible during the day, but will not be held strictly to enforcing 6 feet of social distancing during primary instructional time in the classroom. Health and safety guidelines per the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) should be followed.
2. **Hybrid Learning.** In this planning scenario, schools must limit the overall number of people in school facilities and on transportation vehicles to 50% maximum occupancy. Sufficient social distancing with at least 6 feet between people must occur at all times. If distancing cannot be achieved in the school building, the number of occupants must be reduced.
3. **Distance Learning Only.** This scenario may be implemented if local, regional, or statewide COVID-19 metrics worsen significantly enough to require the suspension of in-person learning. The requirements in this guidance regarding in-person protections would not apply to the general school community, as students and staff would be utilizing distance learning and would not be gathering in groups on school grounds.

The [Safe Learning Plan for the 2020-21 School Year](#) set forth five Learning Models that school districts must select and implement to begin the school year in accordance with the *Safe Learning Plan*. The five models are:

1. In-person Learning for All Students
2. In-person Learning for Elementary Students & Hybrid Learning for Secondary Students
3. Hybrid Learning for All Students
4. Hybrid Learning for Elementary Students & Distance Learning for Secondary Students

5. Distance Learning for All Students

Which learning model a school district may start the school year under is determined by the *learning model selection parameters* as defined in the *Safe Learning Plan*.

The 2020-2021 school year started in the *Hybrid Learning for Elementary Students & Hybrid Learning for Secondary Students* learning model. Beginning September 14, 2020 the Secondary School moved to the *Distance Learning Model* until further notice. Beginning September 28, the Secondary School returned to *Hybrid Learning* while the Elementary School remained in *Hybrid Learning*. On November 10, the Secondary School moved to *Distance Learning* with the Elementary School remaining in *Hybrid Learning*. Beginning on December 7, the Elementary School moved to *Distance Learning* due to staffing challenges and positive cases within our school and communities.

These decisions are made based on the direction and expectations outlined by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), Governor's Office and the Regional Support Team (RST). Together with the RST (that includes public health experts from MDH and Wasca County Public Health, the school district continues to monitor and examine the county [Data for K-12 Schools: 14-day COVID-19 Case Rate by County \(PDF\)](#), the learning model selection parameters as defined in the [Safe Learning Plan for the 2020-21 School Year](#) along with the most current data of positive cases and number of quarantined and isolated cases within our school buildings to determine the appropriate learning model.

The safety and health of our students, staff, and ultimately our communities are the District's top priorities. We will continue to follow the MDH, MDE and executive order guidance to assist us in our decisions going forward. If the COVID 19 risk increases, we may need to switch to a more restrictive learning model, or if the risk decreases, we may turn to a less restrictive model and bring our students back to in-person classes on a full-time basis. Ultimately we want to meet your child(ren)'s educational needs and do our best to limit the spread of the COVID 19 virus. We realize each model has complexities for families as well as for the District. We hope, however, that our plan, that includes a distance learning option within the *In-person for All* and the *Hybrid* models, will provide your child(ren) with exciting, nurturing, and enjoyable learning experiences.

As you read through the plan in detail, you will find that it begins with information relevant to both school buildings including:

- Guiding Principles and Beliefs
- General School Building Guidelines and Expectations
- Child Nutrition Services
- Transportation

You will then see the three instructional learning plans for each school in detail including our Community Education Preschool planning. Overall, our Hybrid model has divided students into

two groups; “A” and “B.” Each group will attend in-person every-other-day based on the A/B calendar presented in the learning plans. On the day not attending in-person, students will participate in distance learning as described in the specific school plan.

Full-time distance learning will be an option for all grade levels. For those families choosing to have their child(ren) begin the school year in the full *Distance Learning* option rather than attending in-person as part of the Hybrid model, it is important that you have been in contact with your building principal. Families could change to whatever plan we are using at mid-quarter (4-5 weeks) or quarter breaks. As you will see in the specific school plans, students who use the distance learning plan will be remotely active along with peers attending in-person.

For those families who normally use the school district’s transportation in getting to school and back home, be sure to contact the school district with any questions you may have once you have been contacted regarding transportation plans. For any families wishing to transport their own child(ren) rather than riding the school bus, please let us know so that we can make the necessary adjustments in our transportation scheduling.

Public schools are designed and intended to be places for students to gather together, learn together and socialize together. When schools are restricted in allowing this to fully happen, it creates a hardship on families, staff and mostly on our students. It is our commitment and goal to allow all students to attend in-person and together as soon as we can do it safely. As mentioned previously, we will follow all MDH, MDE and executive orders given by Governor Walz moving forward in determining the learning model for each school.

Thank you again for your patience, understanding and support as we start the school year. While a great deal of work, time and planning is reflected in this plan, we know it will be a “plan in progress” as we acknowledge we have likely not thought of everything. Your continued involvement, engagement, and input will be important so that we will be able to continually improve our plans and processes in order to provide a great experience for your child(ren) in a safe environment. Do not hesitate to reach out to your child(ren)’s teacher, principal, or me so that we can assist you and your child(ren).

Dale Carlson
Superintendent

2020-2021 School Learning Plan

The following is a list of the plans and actions developed by the NRHEG Public Schools. Our goal is to provide the best educational experience possible for students in the safest environment we can provide. We appreciate the necessary cooperation from everyone to do this.

We developed these plans using the guidelines from MDE, MDH and the Governor's Executive Orders. You will find on our [2020-2021 School Year Planning & COVID-19 Information Page](#) a great deal of resources including forms and processes to be used and practiced throughout the school year. Please take the time to look over these resources on our website and those that are included with this document.

Information on the spread of Covid-19 will be updated weekly, and the spread may impact our ability to be open as outlined in this letter. Likely we will need to transition from one learning plan

to another as the Covid-19 cases increase or decrease. Please note that our ability to open or have students in our classrooms is dependent on how community members practice safe Covid-19 measures. Please wear a mask, wash your hands, and reduce the chance of spreading Covid-19 for our children's sake.

Guiding Principles and Beliefs

- Safety first
- Transparent with processes and procedures
- Decisions based on science, best practices, and data
- Deliberate and decisive decisions based on what is best for all students, families, employees and communities

General School Building Guidelines and Expectations

Much of the information below is relevant for both *In-person for All* and *Hybrid Learning* models. Some of the information may only be relevant for the *Hybrid Learning* model including social distancing-related information.

Student health monitoring and general procedure

- Parents are asked to check their child(ren) daily in the morning before sending them off to school. At this time, schools will not be screening and temperature checking per CDC guidelines.
- Parents are asked to complete the [2020-2021 Student Safety Protocol Parent Acknowledgment](#)

[Screening K-12 Students for Symptoms of COVID-19: Limitations and Considerations](#)

[Decision Tree for People with COVID-19 Symptoms in Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs](#)

- Students will be required to wear masks at all times per the Governor's [Executive Order 20-81](#) and [School Board Policy 808](#). This requirement will include while passing from class to class or in the hallway and while entering the building. All students will receive masks as provided by the State of Minnesota. The school district will also have masks available as needed. Families are asked to provide masks for their student(s) if possible.
- The District will make every effort to keep students in separate groups or the pod concept when appropriate.
- "A" and "B" groups will first be selected by family groups K-12 and sorted to balance bus routes as much as possible. Balancing will allow older siblings to be home with younger siblings when students are in a distance-learning or hybrid model for K-12.

Classroom layout

- Setting classrooms up to allow for maximum occupancy using CDC and MDH guidelines including 6' distancing if in a *Hybrid Learning* model. The number of seats in a classroom will vary depending on classroom size and the expectations given the type of learning plan we are executing.
- Students will be assigned seats in the classroom, and we will maximize social distance as possible and necessary. The students will be facing the front of the classroom or teacher's presentation area when possible.
- Students will be required to wear masks in the classroom, and any time they are away from their seats.
- The classroom dimensions will determine the number of students in each room and how we will utilize space.
- Students will be required to sanitize their hands upon entering the classroom before sitting in their seat. Students will be required to sanitize their hands upon leaving the classroom. Sanitizer approved to be effective for COVID-19 will be available in each classroom as well as other areas in the school building in which students and staff access.

Hallways

- When traveling in any hallway, students and staff must walk on the side of the hallway to their right. Preferably, no face to face passing happens during the school day.
- Students must wear masks during the passing time or any time that they are moving from their seats.

- Passing times may be staggered to minimize the possibility of passing a virus or infection.
- Students may use backpacks to carry material to school, from class-to-class, and to home. Locker use will be reserved for storing coats, boots and other winter attire when needed. The reason for limiting the use of lockers is to minimize students from gathering.

Restrooms and Locker Rooms

- These spaces will be cleaned daily and randomly during the day following MDH/CDC guidance.
- Locker room use will be limited. Shower use may not be permitted. Cleaning will immediately follow any use during the school day.
- Restroom use guidelines are outlined in the specific school plan as there may be differences between Elementary and Secondary. Students must wash their hands with soap and water thoroughly before leaving the restroom.

Dining and Cafeteria

- The cafeteria will be limited use as groups cannot gather together.
- Individual lunch bags for student dining will be provided as needed.
- Students will be assigned eating areas, which may include hallways, cafeteria, and classrooms. Specific plans are included in the individual school plans.

Staff will:

- Staff are to maintain social distance from each other as much as possible.
- Staff will use the daily checklist to assess their health and symptoms, including temperature checks. Staff should check their temperature throughout the day randomly. Non-contact thermometers will be available in the offices.

Building access

- All visitor screening will occur before entering the building beyond the school office or delivery receiving areas. If anyone shows COVID-19 symptoms, they will be required to leave. See [Safety Protocol for Visitors 7-24-2020](#)

Contractor expectations

- There will be some construction/remodeling at both school buildings to start the school year. All contractor and worker expectations are to follow the district's [Safety Protocol for Visitors 7-24-2020](#) to be in the building. Contractors will be responsible for maintaining a healthy work environment for all.
- Every effort will be made to keep students/staff and contractors separated, but there are some chances where students and workers could be in the hallway at the same time. Our contractors know that they are not to engage with students unless there are safety concerns.

Daily schedule

- Students and staff will follow the schedule that is provided in the specific school plan.
- At this time, school day start and end times are not expected to change, but the student's classroom schedule may change.
- Students will be required to leave the building at the end of the day unless they are participating in a school activity, meeting with a staff member or have other school business to take care of in the building.
- Students will not be permitted to gather in groups in common spaces for sanitary reasons i.e. cafeteria, commons, locker areas, hallways, etc.
- Field trips and assemblies are discontinued until further notice.

Building signage and notifications:

- Posters and other signage will be displayed reminding all students, staff, visitors to:
 - socially distance
 - wear a mask
 - wash/sanitize hands
- Water fountains will be turned off except for water bottle filling stations. Students and staff are allowed to have a water bottle in the classroom, and it must not be shared.
- Students will be expected to remain to the right in the hallways to move from one class to another. All attempts are being made to keep students from passing each other in opposite directions. Class passing times may be adjusted as needed.

Building Cleaning and Sanitation

- Virus-killing cleaning solutions will be used for disinfection.
- Staff will clean high touch areas throughout the day.
- Classroom doors will remain open while students are present.
- Students may be asked to keep their areas and equipment clean, which may include wiping down their desks and material they used throughout and at the end of the day. Solutions will be provided for this purpose.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be available in every classroom and throughout the building for students and staff.
- Soap dispensers are available in all restrooms.
- Cleaning supplies will be available in all classrooms and meeting rooms.
- Schools will also be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected during the evening shifts or when possible.

Child Nutrition Services

Safe preparation Practices

- The kitchen surfaces will be sanitized and cleaned every day.
- Disposable utensils and trays will be used.
- Hand washing and hand sanitizing will be available for students before eating.
- The kitchen staff will be grouped to avoid a possible viral spread throughout our staff.

Breakfast and Lunch for all students every day

- Students will spread out in the cafeteria, hallways and rooms as much as possible during lunchtime for social distancing.
- In the *Hybrid learning* model, students attending *in-person* on their designated day will be provided with meals to take home with them before being dismissed and/or exiting their school bus so that they have their meals for their *Distance Learning* assigned day.
- Meals will be provided to any student on a full-time Distancing Learning plan. Details on the pick up of those meals will be provided to those families choosing *distance learning* as their learning option. Payment for meals will be based on a families' free, reduced, or paid status. You can access the [Food Service/Nutrition / Free & Reduce Application Information](#) on the district's website.

Transportation

For those families using school district transportation, it is important for parents to communicate with their child(ren)'s driver with questions or concerns. Parents may also contact their child(ren)'s principal or the school district office.

Families may expect for drivers to:

- Wear a mask and/or face shield while students are loading, seated and exiting the bus or another school vehicle.
- Wear gloves while handling anything onboard the bus or in the vehicle.
- Stay home when sick.
- Ensure all buses are disinfected after each route.
- Enforce all safety rules including but not limited to:
 - Require all students to wear a mask when on the bus or in the vehicle
 - Requiring students from the same household to sit in the same seat
 - Students must load from back to front regardless of age
 - Sanitizing of hands may occur on bus
 - Students must try to minimize touching other seats and other common touchpoints

Families are expected to:

- Screen their child(ren) each morning before sending to school including boarding a school bus or entering another school vehicle.

- Screening includes making sure their child(ren) does not show any symptoms related to COVID-19 including having a temperature over 100.4 F. If there are signs, the child must remain home. The parent is to notify the school (and bus driver) if their child is going to remain home.
- For families transporting their own child(ren) including student drivers, only families/students from the same household are to travel in the same vehicle.
- Families/students are not to “carpool” with others not from the same household.
- Parents complete the [2020-2021 Student Safety Protocol Parent Acknowledgment](#)

Students are expected to:

- Be assessed each morning by their parents before being sent to school using the [CDC Daily Home Screening for Students Checklist](#)
- Wear masks on the bus unless medically unable. Students would need a doctor's order not to wear a mask.
- Students will follow the safety protocol as provided by the Bus Driver and also included in this Learning Plan and the 2020-2021 [Student Safety Protocol Parent Acknowledgment](#). If they do not, they may be removed from the bus for an amount of time determined by the school district.
- Students must load from the back to the front of the bus and unload front to back. Assigned seats may be given if needed to ensure seat spacing requirements are being followed. Some variance may occur based on needs, discipline, siblings sitting together in the same seat, etc.
- Consuming food and drinks on the bus is prohibited.

Elementary School Learning Plan

[Elementary School Learning Plan](#)
[Hybrid Model Addendum-Bridges/Kindergarten](#)

Secondary School Learning Plan

[Hybrid Learning Model](#)
[In-person for All Learning Model](#)
[Distance Learning Model](#) revised 9-10-20

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

NRHEG COVID-19 Documents

[NRHEG COVID-19 Preparedness Plan](#)

[2020-2021 Student Safety Protocol Parent Acknowledgment](#)

MDE Links

[Families can learn more about what the plan means for them here](#)

[Frequently asked questions about the Safe Learning Plan](#)

MDH Links

[About COVID-19](#)

[Decision Tree for People with COVID-19 Symptoms in Youth, Student, and Child Care Programs](#)

[Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 - watch for symptoms](#)

[2020-21 Planning Guidance for Minnesota Public Schools](#)

CDC Links

[Considerations for Schools](#)

[What to Do If You Are Sick](#)

[Transportation Safety / COVID-19](#)

Governor's Executive Orders

[Executive Order](#)